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THE NEW YORK

LATIN LEAFLET

Entered at the Post Office in Brooklyn as second-class matter, October 29, 1900
Under the Act of March 3, 1879

25 Issues

Every Penny of
Every Subscription
goes into the
Scholarship Fund

VOL IV

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 8, 1904

No 89

TRUSTEES OF THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

ARTHUR S SOMERS, Ex-Commissioner of Education
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Eleventh Meeting of the Latin Club

The eleventh regular meeting of The New York Latin Club is called for Saturday, February 27th, at 12 M, in the Hotel Albert, corner of University Place and Eleventh street, New York. Professor N G McCrea, of Columbia University, will address the club on "The Papers of the College Entrance Board". All persons who are interested, whether teachers of Latin or not, are cordially invited to be present. The plan is to serve luncheon (50 cents a plate for everybody) at 12 M, promptly, so that there shall be no delay. The address will follow the luncheon, and adjournment will occur about 2 P M, thus leaving the afternoon still unbroken for those who attend. Please send a postal card at once to the Sec'y, Mr A L Hodges, 309 W 101st, N Y, if you intend to be present, so that we may inform Mr. Frenkel, the proprietor of the hotel, how many to expect. Please attend to this at once.

H H BICE, President
A L HODGES, Secretary

SECOND YEAR LATIN

Nov 27, 1903

Dear Professor Lodge:

To "Latin Leaflet" III No 75 (May 11, 1903) pp 3-4, add:

(5) WHY does sound pedagogy require that Caesar Book I be read first, or read at all, or read entire, or read wholly in Latin? What maxim of pedagogy is more essential than to fit your material to the age, the capacity, the interest of your student? What chapter in Tacitus (or Thucydides) makes a severer call on the logical reasoning power of an adult, of a master of style, than *e g B G I, 35: quoniam—inferret?* Why must this, and a hundred such sentences, be read by infants? Yet, if they "read" (*rede*) a sentence at all, what less can they do than understand its structure, and through the structure master its meaning?

Why may we not read "first" a little essay on Gallic or German manners, or on the animals in the German forests, or an episode of peculiar interest to us like the first arrival of a civilized observer in Britain (*B G IV, 20 ff*) or, if we like, the first recorded of the numberless campaigns in Flanders (*B G II, passim*)? Why is all that so self-evidently

perverse as to be turned down in a parenthesis without argument?

Personally, my conscience is burdened by the memory of every class I ever dragged, as I used to do, thro' B G I. But if dragged at all, how can they escape the mazes of *oratio obliqua*? And are they not worse off still if not given the clue?—That is, *when there is any*. It is only by a series of improvised conventions that (*B G I, 36*) *quod sibi contendisse* with its thrice-shifted *sibi* (*Ariovistus*) *se* (*Caesar*) *secum* (*Ariovistus*) *sua* ("nemo") means anything at all. Caesar all but worked miracles, with his keen-edged straight-cutting phrase: but Latin had no means to turn any such sentences clearly into *oratio obliqua*. Caesar's failure is most interesting and instructive:—to a philosophic linguist.

But for the children, why may we not cull? *E g* dip into Seneca, Epistles XXXI, 9: "*Tutum iter est, iucundum est, ad quod natura te instruxit—Parem autem deo pecunia non faciet. Deus nihil habet. Non turba servorum lecitiam tuam per itinera urbana ac peregrina portantium. Deus ille maximus potentissimusque ipse vehit omnia—*". Read Pliny's love-letter (Epist. VII, 5) to his wife: Aulus Gellius's discussion (*N A III, 2*) on when the day properly begins: Apuleius's fairy-tale (*Met. IV, 28*): "*Erant in quadam civitate rex et regina; hi tres filios forma conspicuas habuere—*".

If you think you can gild this "silver" Latin, gild it. Or if you cannot cull fit flowers for childhood, make your own modern Latin anthology. But why, oh piper, pipe mountainward? The magic gate will not open. Keep the footpath, with mercy for tender feet! Why not?

Yours,

WILLIAM CRANSTON LAWTON,
Adelphi College, Brooklyn

December 8, 1903.

To the Editor of THE LEAFLET:

I avail myself of your courtesy to answer the foregoing remarks by Professor Lawton.

Professor Lawton's query, as it seems, falls under two heads: 1 Why should a pupil be required to read the first book before the second? and 2 Why should the pupil be required to read such difficult passages as are to be found in the first book of Caesar, as well as other books, at all?

In answer to the second I would say that, I hold no brief for the reading of Caesar immediately after the pupil has finished his beginner's book. Personally, I maintain that some Latin that is much more simple than Caesar should follow the beginner's book: Whether that should be the *Viri Romae* or some small book of selections properly arranged as to difficulty, is a question which I need not discuss. But I am thoroughly in sympathy with any move-

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ment to bridge the gap between the beginner's book and Caesar by some reading of a much more elementary character. I am glad to admit (what I have elsewhere maintained) that Caesar is a book written for adults and, consequently, very difficult of appreciation by the youthful mind even with the best assistance. No such implication was involved in my previous remarks as Professor Lawton's query might seem to indicate.

To come to the other part of his query: Since the consensus of usage in the majority of our schools has decided on the reading of Caesar as the first connected reading that the pupils are set to do, the question at once arises where we are to begin. It has recently been decided in regard to the course in the New York schools that we should begin with the second book. Now, as I said before, this is pedagogically unsound for the following reasons: It breaks the continuity of Caesar's narrative; it thereby destroys the possibility of explaining to the pupils who read the book why Caesar was in Gaul at all, and how it came to pass that the various campaigns in the subjugation of Gaul developed one out of the other in a continually widening sphere, so that, whatever may have been Caesar's intention when he came to the aid of the Ædui, the logic of circumstances forced him to a course of conquest which, in all probability, he himself did not foresee at the beginning. Even the interesting chapter on the invasion of Britain gains a new interest when we observe that, in a general way, it was an accident and not a part of Caesar's design. In other words, a book that is written to describe a continuously developing movement should not be begun in the middle. The only reason that could possibly justify such a divergence from the logical view of things would be that the first book of Caesar is so much more difficult than the second book that what is gained by the study of the developing narrative is lost by the difficulty of the reading. Now here, I imagine, people's views will differ widely. It is customary to say that the first book is very much more difficult than the second, and if this is true the contention for the reading of the second book first would in some measure be justified. On the other hand, I have heard competent teachers maintain that, with the exception of the indirect discourse in the first book, it is no more difficult than the second; and I have heard some actually say that, even with this indirect discourse, it is no more difficult than the second. By my own experience, I am a prejudiced critic, for I, as a boy, read the first book of Caesar first, to my great satisfaction. I may say, however, that I had an exceptionally fine Latin teacher, and had read some easier Latin before.

The question as to the relative difficulty of the two books, excluding the chapters in indirect discourse in the first book, ought, it would seem, to be easy to settle, and for the consideration of my readers I make the following suggestions:

If we study the introductory chapters in the first and second books we will find this: the first chapter of the first book contains a number of short and not difficult sentences, with very little chance for syntactical discussion. The second, third and fourth chapters contain the short but extremely interesting story of Orgetorix; in these chapters also the sentences are not long and the constructions involved are simple. In the third chapter there is a short

passage in indirect discourse of five lines. We thus have at the outset a preface which is complete in itself, and an episode which is complete in itself. It is almost a truism that when we read slowly we should confine our reading as closely as possible to short narratives that can be completed in a reasonable time. We have this in the beginning of the first book. If we turn to the second book we find the first chapter consists of two sentences, one of five, the other of eleven lines; that, at the very outset, in the second sentence, we have a short passage in indirect discourse. The second chapter is simple and consists of short sentences. The third chapter again introduces us to indirect discourse, a passage of ten lines closing with a very difficult shift from a perfect to an imperfect subjunctive after a clause introduced by "quin." The fourth chapter is not difficult so far as the subject-matter is concerned, but contains about twenty lines of indirect discourse. Taking these four chapters as samples, any unprejudiced critic, as it seems to me, will have to admit that in the matter itself we find the first book easier than the second.

The long chapters in indirect discourse, to which reference has been made, in the first book are not integral portions of the narrative; they can be omitted without detracting from Caesar's story, and they can be paraphrased by the teacher or translated without detracting from the work of the class. These are undeniably difficult; they are likewise, as I have said, unnecessary. Personally, I should not lay much stress upon the teaching of indirect discourse at all. It is not an important part in Latin style at this stage of a pupil's development. There is more of it in Caesar than he will meet with at any other time in his career. It is less vital, and, at the same time, it is less satisfactory. I see no reason why, if the first book is read first, there is any necessity that the long indirect discourse chapters should be read.

Furthermore, the second book contains one long episode which comprises almost the whole book. The first book contains two episodes, the first of which—the war against the Helvetians—is completed in the twenty-ninth chapter and is much shorter than the single episode in the second book. For this reason, likewise, it is better to begin with the first book because we get our complete episode more quickly than we do in the second book.

Such are my reasons for maintaining that pedagogically it is necessary to begin with the first book. If it could be shown that the second book were easier than the first, omitting the indirect discourse in the first, there would be some basis for beginning with it.

I do not yield to Professor Lawton, nor to any one, in my sympathy for the youth that is obliged to make his preliminary preparation for reading Caesar in one year. I should prefer, as I have said, that a considerable interval after the beginner's book should be devoted to easy Latin reading. Nor am I very much disturbed by the bugbear of Silver Latinity. But in the reading of Caesar we have a condition, and not a theory, and it was to this particular condition that I addressed myself in my remarks last spring.

Yours very truly,

GONZALEZ LODGE

Teachers' College, Columbia University.